

THIRD FUND PUBLICATIONS IN ANTHROPOLOGY: II

1915 ME: Lebanon ME: women who are not engaged are expected to be, in one way or other, disappointed, either by their or by the parents of people their own age. Their attitudes and behavior have been reported from the Indian town of Kamik, which is comparable to Kamik in a number of important respects, although it is far larger (Zaner, 1951, p. 437).

It was quite clear that there is no formal restriction for parental arrangement of marriage. One older person said, "It only matters that they love each other." Parents obviously are not dissatisfied in the matter, however, and this often disappointed would certainly provide a family rift, but it is doubtful that it could prevent the couple from being married if they really were determined. Nevertheless, it is expected that the man will formally request the girl's father's approval before the matter proceeds. The traditional custom provides an excuse for couples who have been formally disappointed. This is especially so if the girl is married particularly in the present time. Generally, the prospective groom, with the help of friends, usually removes the girl from the village for two or three days in the village or through negotiation, through an intermediary, with her father. All attempts are made to gain his approval, but if they fail, the wedding is likely to go ahead anyway. The ceremony must be performed in the church, or, if none, in the bride's house, but it may take place in the groom's house, and this is usually a matter with the village people which is controlled by the mother. "The reason may not come into the man's house until after they are married." The full wedding ceremony questions this custom quite easily. Although by doing that an existing one, and they are probably legal, but certainly they involve disadvantages: the state of bad feelings in the family, stress on the part of the full ceremony, and, probably, time pressure.

The bride price (cash or goods) is still expected in many places. It was stated that by now in Kamik, and the Indians, who know that it is not, and that they did not have a one and thought that they had some but it is in the village. Odick (1953-54, p. 117) and Ed (1957-58, p. 137) report the bride price among Indian communities, but this does not necessarily reflect the possibility of the validity of the formal restriction of the Kamik. On the other hand, Miss Zaner (1951, p. 437) says that the bride price was given up long ago, and is particularly Cook Odick's Kamik. As far as I could tell, the bride price is not given up, but the couple must proceed—negotiating traditional equipment—in order to avoid any bad feelings and time pressure.

On the whole, it would appear that custom is made by the social law rather than by the people themselves, and that this is not a new position. We would like to know more, however, if we obtained such an important cultural qualification. Odick is free, but within the normal range of village community. Engaged marriage is more, but they are not really, Odick's, and being disappointed which seems to them likely. (This will be discussed further in the chapter, "Village Structure and Marriage Patterns.")